

# update

Vol. 6, No. 4

June 15, 1983

## Hospital Center appoints new board member

"The past differences must be buried. This is a new era in health care in this community and the possibilities are unlimited".



Indru T. Khubchandani, M.D.

Indru T. Khubchandani, M.D., newest member of the Hospital Center board, has few doubts about the future of the hospital. It's good. "The Hospital Center has the best possible staff, management team, medical staff, and nursing staff. The critical care units are excellent. The Pool Trust is unique. With a responsive board and with HealthEast as a guiding body, we have the potential to be one of the best institutions in the east and perhaps the country".

Khubchandani speaks in quiet measured tones but the confidence behind his words is contagious. When listening to him you can't help believing that any future is possible for HealthEast and both its subsidiaries, the Hospital Center and The Allentown Hospital. And as a member of both the HealthEast and the Hospital Center boards, Khubchandani will be very involved in setting the future directions for all of us.

At the same time he talks about the possibilities for the future, Khubchandani also cautions that there are some difficult times ahead. Referring to increasing government regulations, cutbacks in funding, and increasing public questions about health care costs he stated, "There is a revolution taking place in the health care industry. The spotlight is on us and there are going to be some sweeping changes. A lot of people are going to have to change their attitudes and philosophies about health care. It's going to be a difficult transition and its going to take a while".

Khubchandani feels that in the past the public has not been too concerned about the cost of health care. That time is over now and the public is applying pressure to hold costs down. The trick for the future will be to respond to that need without killing the momentum.

Khubchandani believes that board members in the future will have to be more active if we are going to balance these two concerns. "Board members are going to have to do their homework and take their assignments more seriously. They are going to have to justify their decisions to the public much more than they have in the past".

## Burn Foundation celebrates tenth anniversary

Throughout eastern Pennsylvania, southern and central New Jersey, and Delaware, some three hundred people lost their lives last year as a result of burns and other fire related injuries. Thousands more came close to losing their lives but survived severe burns because of the special burn care available in this region. The fact that there were not more burn victims and more burn related deaths is a tribute to the efforts of many people but it is one very special organization, the Burn Foundation, that makes many of these efforts possible.

Before 1973 the picture in this region was very different. Specialized burn care as we know it today did not exist and the chances of surviving serious burns were poor. In addition, very little was being done to prevent burn deaths in the best way; educating people so they would avoid becoming burn victims in the first place. Then in 1973 the picture began to change. Approval was given to build specialized burn treatment centers at Crozer-Chester and St. Agnes Medical Centers in Philadelphia. This important step would, for the first time, give area burn victims a real chance at survival as these new centers would be able to provide the special multi-disciplinary care needed in burn cases. A second important step was taken in April of 1973 when the Burn Foundation was created.

See *Burn Foundation* — page 2



# New faces in public relations



*Rich Cutshall*



*Del Pongracz*

The public relations department has two new faces, Rich Cutshall and Del Pongracz. Cutshall was appointed assistant director for internal communications and replaces Jim Higgins who left in late March to take a position as director of community relations at Doylestown Hospital. Pongracz was appointed assistant director for external communications and is responsible for media and community relations.

Before taking the position in public relations, Cutshall was the chief of police in Northampton Borough. During the six years that he held that position, Cutshall was responsible for all planning, management, and public relations functions in a department with forty full and part time employees. In addition to his management and planning duties, Cutshall developed a marketing and media program which created a positive public image for the department. Prior to his employment in Northampton, Cutshall spent four years with the Fairfax County, Virginia Police Department. While working for this department, an 800 officer department in the Virginia suburbs of Washington, D.C., Cutshall spent two years as the department's planning and media relations officer. This position involved a great deal of public contact as well as contact with representatives of the area's newspaper, television, and radio news agencies.

Cutshall is a member of the board of directors for the Rape Crisis Council of the Lehigh Valley and serves as chairman of that organization's public relations committee. In addition, Cutshall has served as an adjunct instructor at Lehigh County Community College where he also serves on the curriculum development committee for the criminal justice program. Cutshall is a graduate of Penn State University where he received a bachelor of science degree.

Pongracz has wide regional experience in media and public relations. As president of Del Pongracz Associates, a Bethlehem based public relations agency, she provided service to business, industry, and private non-profit organizations in the Lehigh Valley, Harrisburg, and Philadelphia areas for over 15 years. She created and directed programs for the greater Bethlehem Area Chamber of Commerce, the Northampton County Bar Association, the U.S. Department of Labor, the Lehigh Valley Railroad, The Schuylkill County Regional Development Corporation, and the Thompson Business Institute in Philadelphia. Pongracz was also responsible for successful fund drives for Wiley House and Lehigh Valley United Cerebral Palsy. She has been an adjunct professor of journalism at Lehigh University and this semester is teaching a class in public relations and marketing for small businesses at Northampton County Community College. Pongracz is a graduate of The Price School of Journalism and Advertising in Philadelphia.

## Burn Foundation

*(Continued from page 1)*

Created at first to coordinate the burn center fund raising activities of Crozer-Chester and St. Agnes Medical Centers, the Burn Foundation has grown into one of the most important parts of the burn prevention and burn care efforts in a region that includes a population of ten million people. The burn centers at four hospitals: the Lehigh Valley Hospital Center locally and, Crozer-Chester Medical Center, St. Agnes Medical Center, and St. Christopher's Hospital for Children all in Philadelphia, now belong to the Burn Foundation. The Burn Foundation continues to coordinate the fund raising activities of the member centers, but it also plays a much larger role. It helps to provide community burn awareness and burn prevention programs throughout the region. It also helps provide training in burn treatment programs throughout the region. It also helps provide training in burn treatment to fire departments and ambulance corps throughout the region. Finally, the Burn Foundation helps provide education in burn treatment for the region's health care professionals.

We wish the Burn Foundation a happy tenth anniversary and hope that there will be many more.

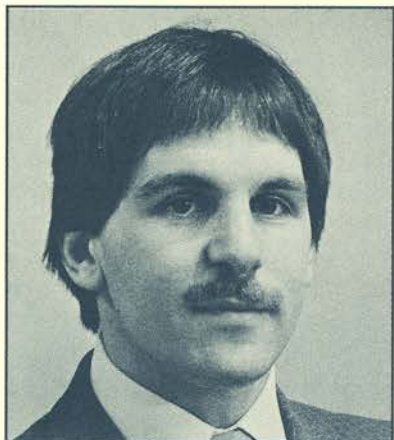
## Board member

*(Continued from page 1)*

Khubchandani, chief of the colon and rectal division here and at The Allentown Hospital, is an internationally known surgeon, lecturer, and consultant. He is a graduate of the Grant Medical College in Bombay, India and did postgraduate study in clinical surgery at the Royal College of Surgeons in England. He completed a fellowship in general surgery at New England Hospital in Boston and a residency in proctologic surgery at Temple University Medical Center in Philadelphia. He has taught at the Temple University School of Medicine, The University of Bombay Grant Medical College in Bombay, India, The University of Mexico, and The University of Cairo.



## Administrative assistant appointed



John Muolo

In early February, the Hospital Center announced the appointment of John Muolo to the position of administrative assistant. Muolo succeeds Walter Jura who left the Hospital Center to take a position as assistant administrator at Chilton Memorial Hospital in Pompton Plains, New Jersey. Muolo, who started at the Hospital Center February 28, will work closely with Gary Steinberg, our associate administrator, and will be involved in a variety of projects. He will serve as a liaison between the Hospital Center's management team and the MedEvac program. He will help in the development and supervision of a number of grant programs at the Hospital Center and will serve with representatives from The Allentown Hospital on a committee to promote emergency and trauma services. He will also be very involved in planning to meet changes in third party hospital reimbursement policies.

Muolo has a B.S. degree in business administration with an emphasis in accounting from Susquehanna University and a master's degree in health care administration from George Washington University. Most recently he served as the director of emergency services at St. Joseph's Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee where he also served a one year residency. As director of emergency services, Muolo directed the day to day operation of that department and put into place changes to improve patient care and internal relations. Earlier in his career, Muolo served for two years as a Medicaid field officer for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

## We're back on schedule

We owe you, our readers, an apology for the delay in getting Update to you on schedule the past few months. We know many of you depend on us to keep you informed about events here at the Hospital Center and we apologize for any inconvenience we have caused you. We also thank you for your patience.

The delay in producing Update has been the result of staff changes in the public relations department. Our new staff members needed some time to learn the hospital and its people so they can give you the kind of newsletter you want.

With that behind us, we're back on schedule and we think you will be seeing a newsletter that's better than ever. Update will be published on the 1st and 15th of each month and we encourage you to send us information you would like to see included. We are also thinking about making some changes in Update's format and we would like to hear your ideas about how Update can be improved.

## Nurse appreciation teas scheduled

The nurse recruitment committee and the department of nursing have announced that they will sponsor a series of appreciation teas to thank our nursing staff for their special contribution to the hospital throughout the year. Teas will be held during each of the three shifts one day each month beginning in June. Each month, different nursing units will be honored and their activities highlighted.

The first of these teas will be held in the board room from 8:00 - 10:30 A.M. and from 8:00 - 10:00 P.M. on June 15 and from 2:00 - 4:00 A.M. on June 16. Highlighted at the teas during the month of June will be the nursing staff from P.C.C.U., 4A, and the recovery room.

The nurse recruitment committee was formed in late 1980 growing out of a need to make sure we had enough well qualified nurses to meet expanding needs. At the time the committee formed, it was expected we would soon be facing a need for one hundred new nurses to replace departing staff members and to fill new positions created by the opening of 7C. Since the system we were using at that time to find new nurses couldn't meet this need, the committee set as its first task the

development of job descriptions for two professional recruiters. The committee then interviewed candidates to fill those positions and in the spring of 1981, Diane Hildebrand, R.N., B.S.N., M.Ed., and Kim Hitchings, R.N., B.S.N. were appointed as our professional recruiters. Our recruitment program was rolling.

While the recruitment committee has continued to be a part of recruiting new staff members, its role has expanded to look at why nurses leave the Hospital Center and what can be done to keep our well qualified staff. One of the concerns found by the committee was that our recognition of the special contributions made by our nursing staff is basically limited to the activities which take place during nurse recognition week. Yet our nursing staff's dedication, their commitment to what they do, the feelings they pour into caring for their patients, these never end.

The nurse recruitment committee felt there is a need to highlight this contribution for more than one week out of the year and they have sponsored the appreciation teas in an attempt to do this.



# Local Burn Foundation office: It makes a difference



*Professionals teaching professionals*



*Training: the key to effective treatment*



*George Moerkirk, M.D. Training professionals in referral procedures*

A fire breaks out in a home while a family sleeps. One member of the family, a child, awakens unable to breathe the smoke filled air. Terrified, she huddles in a corner waiting for her parents. But instead of her parents, she sees a shadowy figure she has never seen before crawling through the smoke. With no face, a shapeless body, and a humped back, the image is everything the child has ever imagined a monster would be. Panic fills the child's mind and she flees blindly ... right into a blazing hell from which there is no escape. The monster? A firefighter wearing face mask, turnout coat and oxygen tank.

A cookout is almost over and everyone is relaxed. Nobody notices the child wander over to the grill full of hot coals. Upset because the pretty flames have gone out, the child sprays the coals with lighter fluid just like Daddy did two hours ago. With a whoosh the pretty flames return, right up the stream of lighter fluid into the can still held by the child. In a blinding flash, the child's life is changed forever.

These two burn cases represent a list that goes on and on, one preventable case after another. A toddler tips over a pan of hot grease. An elderly woman leans too close to a range while wearing a loose fitting housecoat. A child pulls on a dangling cord only to find it attached to a hot iron. In each of these cases the facts are different but the result is the same. People have been burned, one of the worst injuries imaginable. In some

cases lives are lost. In others, lives are saved but years are lost. Victims suffer pain that can't be described. Victims and their families undergo emotional stresses that leave them scarred for life. And all of it is preventable.

According to our Burn Center and emergency department staff members, that is one of the most frustrating parts of caring for burn victims. All the pain, all the loss, all the stress could be avoided. And that, according to agency director Sandra C. Raymond, is a big part of what the East/Northeast Pennsylvania office of the Burn Foundation is all about. Prevention.

Asked about the focus of her agency, Raymond stated, "It tears at the staff when they see victims coming into the Burn Center. They know what lies ahead and they wish desperately that that person were not there. They wish it could have been prevented. That's where we come in."

The words sound so simple, so logical. Yet the job is so tough. With a staff of three people, the local Burn Foundation office puts together educational and prevention programs for a 17 county area with a population of one and a half million people. Their goal? To eliminate burns. A lofty but probably impossible goal.

So the agency has a second equally important function. To provide training in burn care for hospital staff members and ambulance squad personnel to ensure that when prevention fails, the best of care is available.



*Training to teach burn prevention*



## Records staff goes mobile

During the past few weeks you may have noticed some new faces reviewing patient records in different patient care units throughout the hospital. Actually, these new faces are not new at all, they are staff members from medical records. What is new is the fact that they are now gathering some of the information they need from charts in the patient care units instead of waiting to get that information from records after patients are discharged.

This change in procedure is the result of new federal regulations which will drastically change the hospital reimbursement system in Medicare cases. Under the old system, called fee-for-service, hospitals billed Medicare for every service or procedure performed in each case and the diagnosis in the case had little direct bearing upon payment of the bill.

But under the new system, called prospective payment, this emphasis is reversed and payments to hospitals will be based on diagnoses rather than on services provided. Medicare will establish maximum payment levels for each diagnosis based upon the type and location of the hospital providing service. This schedule along with the diagnoses in any case will determine how much the hospital receives for treating that case.

Further complicating the new reimbursement system is another change contained in the regulations. The amount of time hospitals have to file reimbursement or payment claims will be shortened. To meet these new requirements hospitals will have to change the emphasis in their record keeping systems and will have to collect information that is hard to get more rapidly than ever before.

This is why some medical records staff members are moving out to the patient care areas of the hospital. This move will allow them to review patient records early to make sure information we now need is being recorded quickly and accurately. Each Medicare patient's record will be reviewed on the third day of hospitalization and again on every third day the patient remains here. Then when we file our bill with Medicare, we will be able to include correct diagnostic information so we receive proper payment.



*Training first responders*

The Burn Foundation staff works closely with members of the Burn Center, with members of our auxiliary, with professional educators, and with fire department personnel while designing and presenting a variety of burn prevention and burn care programs. Burn Center staff members and auxiliary members put on a puppet show which teaches pre-schoolers the basics of burn prevention through the antics of Sesame Street characters. Elementary school children learn about the causes of burns and how to avoid them. They also learn what to do if caught in a fire.

All the pre-school and elementary school children get to see firefighters in full turnout gear so the altered appearance of a firefighter at a fire scene won't be frightening. Finally, teachers receive instruction in the art of teaching burn prevention.

Outside the classrooms, the Burn Foundation helps business and industry representatives make the work place free from burn injuries. They provide parents and other adults with literature concerning burn prevention and emergency burn care. Ambulance corps members are instructed in the proper care methods for burn victims. Health care professionals are brought up to date on advancements in burn treatment methods. They also receive instruction in referring serious burns to specialty care burn centers like our own.

The task is awesome. Within the local Burn Foundation's region there are more than three hundred elementary schools, countless day care centers and nurseries, over nine hundred ambulance corps and fire departments, and thirty five hospitals. Programs must be prepared to meet the needs of these groups and must be presented to each of the organizations within the region.



*Photographer: Don Uhrich, The Morning Call*

*The preschool program: In terms they understand*





## Physician appointed to state task force

### Unit instructor appointed

Veronica Wetzel, R.N., B.S.N., has been selected as the new medical-surgical instructor for 7C and 6A. Wetzel joined the hospital staff in 1980 after working two and a half years at Easton Hospital where she gained surgical intensive care experience. Before starting her new duties on May 16, Wetzel worked in our intensive care unit and in the shock/trauma unit after the ICU was split to form the shock/trauma and open heart units.

As a unit instructor, Wetzel will be responsible for the orientation of new nurses on 7C and 6A. She will also set up inservice programs for the staff members in her two units and will help coordinate continuing education programs.

How would you like to help decide how \$4.1 million should be spent? In this time of tight budgets who wouldn't? Well, because of his recent appointment to a state task force that will decide how grant funds should be spent throughout the state, that's the position in which George Moerkirk, M.D., director of pre-hospital emergency medical services and flight operations, finds himself.

The money represents Pennsylvania's share of federal preventive health services block grant funds. Moerkirk will have some say in how it's spent because he was recently appointed to serve on the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant Advisory Task Force of the Pennsylvania Department of Health.

Beginning in the upcoming fiscal year, all federal health service grant funds will be turned over to the states in the form of block grants. Each state will then decide how the money should be distributed. In the past, the federal government reviewed individual grant applications and decided how the grant funds would be dispensed in each state.

The Pennsylvania Department of Health has established three task forces to review grant applications and advise which should be approved and which denied. It is on one of these task forces that Moerkirk has been appointed to serve. In addition to the task force on which Moerkirk will serve, there is a task force on maternal and child health services and one on drug and alcohol services. Together, they will affect the distribution of nearly \$20 million.

As one of the twelve members on the Preventive Health Task Force, Moerkirk will be responsible for representing the views, needs, and concerns of those who provide emergency medical services throughout the state. Having served as co-medical director and medical control physician of the Eastern Pennsylvania Emergency Medical Services Council and as president and chairman of the medical advisory committee of the Pennsylvania Emergency Health Services Council, he knows all too well what those views, needs, and concern are.

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## Medical journal recognizes David Prager, M.D.

The Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA), one of the most widely read of all medical journals, recently paid a special tribute to David Prager, M.D., director of the cancer program here at the Hospital Center and at The Allentown Hospital.

The editorial board of JAMA appointed Prager to act as a consultant and review articles on oncology submitted for publication. Through this appointment, the American Medical Association has recognized Prager as one of the leading experts in his field.

The goal of the journal is to help physicians keep up with changes in the medical world by publishing articles about research, advances in technology, and changing medical practices. These articles are put together by professionals from around the world and are submitted to the journal's editorial board for review and publication. Each article is reviewed by a group of experts who then give their opinion about its value. Prager will be one of the experts reviewing oncology articles submitted for publication.

Prager, who received his medical degree from the Chicago Medical School, has been director of the cancer program at the two hospitals since 1981. In addition, he serves as director of the hematology and coagulation laboratories here at the Hospital Center and as director of the hematology lab at The Allentown Hospital. He has also served as director of The Hemophilia Treatment Center at The Allentown Hospital.

In 1975 Prager was elected president of The Allentown Hospital medical staff and in 1976 he received the distinguished teacher award from the departments of medicine at the Hospital Center and The Allentown Hospital. He is currently a professor of clinical medicine at Hahnemann University School of Medicine in Philadelphia and in the past he has taught at the Hershey Medical Center, the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York, the University of Washington School of Medicine in Seattle, and the Chicago Medical School.



# A salute to our volunteers

A burn victim lies depressed and defeated in the Burn Center. With burns covering most of his face and upper body, he sees little hope for any kind of a normal life. Then he talks with a volunteer who many years before was also a burn victim. That volunteer talks about how he carved out a normal life for himself in spite of his injuries and after their talk, the victim lying in the Burn Center begins to believe he can do the same.

A family traveling from Ohio to New York makes an unexpected stop at the Hospital Center after they are involved in an accident on Rt. 22. Following treatment, they huddle in the cafeteria trying to decide what to do. Since their car was destroyed in the accident and since they have very little money, they can't go forward and they can't go back. A volunteer learns of their problem and invites them to her home. In a matter of a few hours she and her husband, also a volunteer, feed the family, help them clean up and then put them on a bus to complete their once in a lifetime journey to visit relatives.

It's Christmas morning and a small child is brought to the Burn Center after her home is destroyed by fire. Her burns are serious but they don't account for all the pain she is feeling. She's alone, she's scared, and the most magical day of the year for a child has been destroyed. A man and his wife, both of them volunteers, hear about the child and make arrangements with the Burn Center staff to surprise her. Dressed as Santa and his wife they visit the little burn victim and bring her some Christmas gifts. But the greatest gift they deliver can't be wrapped. They bring the little girl the magic of Christmas and with it some of the spirit she will need to overcome her injuries.

The volunteers who did so much good in these and many other similar cases? Bob and Millie Roush, a couple who laughingly refer to themselves as the grandparents of the



*Bob and Millie Roush*

volunteers. This couple started their careers as hospital volunteers before there was a hospital and they have been at it ever since. Working at first out of the old farm house that used to be on the hospital property, they helped with the AHEAD Program, the initial fund raiser that helped build the Hospital Center. Since those early days, the Roush's have given thousands of hours to the Hospital Center making life easier for countless staff members and patients.

The Roush's volunteer their time to the Hospital Center with an intensity that is staggering. Working five or more days many weeks, they have helped with the AHEAD Program, prepared nursing unit report books, made name tags for the volunteers, filed in a number of different departments, sorted bills, reviewed patient cards and notified churches of members' hospitalizations, set up medication carts, delivered medications, made the rounds with the patient cart, sorted mail, and worked in the gift shop. As if that's not enough, they are also very involved in the Channel 39 auction, they help out with Burn Foundation projects, and they devote time to their home community, South Whitehall Township.

Unfortunately, the Roush's were forced to slow down after Bob suffered a heart attack in 1981 and underwent open heart surgery a few

months ago. But Bob's recuperation seems to be going well now and both of them are anxiously planning their return to active service as volunteers. They both miss the contact they had with people and they miss being able to help. In addition to the other things he does as a volunteer, Bob hopes to get involved in the Zipper Club when he returns so he can use his recent experience to help others face what he has gone through.

This will not be the first time Bob has drawn on his own experiences to help others face crises in their lives. At the age of 11 his clothes caught fire and he was badly burned. Bob spent months in a hospital unable to move so he knows all too well what our burn patients are thinking and feeling. That experience is one of the driving forces behind Bob's involvement as a volunteer and over the years he has spent a great deal of time helping burn patients fight back.

There's no question the Roush's are very special people because of what they do but they're not alone. During the past year nearly 400 volunteers have given over 81,000 hours of their time to the hospital and since 1974, over 100 volunteers have each donated between 1,000 and 7,500 hours of service. Over the years volunteers have helped just about every department in the hospital with clerical work, patient care, special projects, or community services. They have allowed the hospital to do things that quite simply could not have been done without their help. But more important, our volunteers bring something to the hospital that no amount of money can buy, community involvement.

This is the time of year when we thank our volunteers for their service. So thank you, Bob Roush. Thank you, Millie Roush. And thank you all those other volunteers like Bob and Millie who help make this hospital a special place for so many people.



## Engineering reorganizes

Organizational changes that included promotions for two engineering department supervisors were recently announced by Leonard Farkas, director of engineering. Glenn Schneider was promoted from assistant director to associate director of engineering and Willard Steward was promoted from building maintenance supervisor to the position vacated by Schneider, assistant director of engineering.

In his new position, Steward will supervise a larger group of trades staff members. Included will be the carpenters, electricians, plumbers, building mechanics, equipment mechanics, and HVAC mechanics. Schneider's promotion will allow him to serve more fully as an assistant to Farkas.

Farkas explained that the changes were needed to meet the increasing work load handled by his department. The changes will allow better communication and coordination within his department and between engineering and other hospital staff members.

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## Credit union goes on-line

Remember those signs we used to see along the roadways that stated, "Temporary inconvenience - permanent improvement?" Well, the Credit Union staff has put one in front of their office. In order to convert from a manual to an on-line computer record system, the office will be closed on Wednesday, June 29 and Friday, July 1. The last day of business for the Credit Union before the conversion will be Friday, June 24 and operations will return to normal on Wednesday, July 6.

## Corrections noted

We would like to correct two errors which appeared in the last edition of Update, Vol. 6, No. 3. In a report on the appointment of Herbert L. Hyman, M.D., to the National Digestive Diseases Advisory Board of the National Institute of Health, we incorrectly stated he had received his medical degree from the University of Cincinnati. Hyman received his medical degree from Georgetown University and served as a medical resident at the University of Cincinnati.

In the section of Update devoted to new employees, we welcomed Barbara Geldon who joined the staff at the Burn Foundation. Unfortunately, we misspelled her name. We apologize to them and to our readers for these errors.

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